DREAM ON…

by Lee Scantlin

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Dreams Can Be Enlightening

Robert Adams said, ***"There's no difference to me between the waking state, the dreaming state, the sleeping state, and the vision state.*** They're all the same. I'm aware of all of them, but I am not them. I observe them. I see them happening. As a matter of fact, sometimes I can not tell the difference. Sometimes I don't know whether I'm dreaming, or awake, or having a vision, or I'm asleep. It's all the same, because I take a step backward, and I watch myself going through all these things."

They're all the same. The dreaming state is the same as the waking state, the same as "reality"! If this is true, perhaps we can understand the nature of "reality," of "manifestation," by looking at the nature of dreams. We can look at our dreams and gain insight into "reality," this living dream manifested in mind.

The first thing to notice is that there is nothing happening in your experience right now that couldn't happen in a dream. Let's suppose that you're sitting right now at a table in Starbucks, looking through this little booklet. Several of your friends are at the table with you. You're all sipping cappuccinos, lattes or Americanos, snacking on muffins, scones or bagels, and talking about what you did last night. The fellowship might go on for an hour or so. This might be what's happening right now, and it could just as easily be happening in a dream,

right? In fact, perhaps the last time you went to Starbucks you were dreaming. That dream might be continuing right now! There's really no way to be certain, is there? There's nothing in your experience right now that you couldn't dream.

In the following paragraphs we'll investigate this dream about you and your friends at the table in Starbucks, and perhaps gain some insight into the truths sages have been telling us for millennia.

Matter is Mind

One thing sages tell us is that matter is mind, that the matter you experience is nothing more than *material concepts* of the content of your consciousness (your concepts, your conditioning, your beliefs, your fears) within that functioning of your consciousness which we call "mind" (or "imagination").

There's no way to prove this isn't true, that matter is "real" and "out there," external and independent of us. It's certainly true in your dreams. There's lots of matter in your Starbucks dream: the table, the latte, your friends. You can rap on the table with your knuckles and feel the hardness. You can sip your latte, taste the coffee and smell the aroma. You can see your friends and hear the conversation. Your senses (the senses of the "you" in your dream) are certainly reporting matter. And yet it's all a dream—constructed by your subconscious in your mind—constructed out of the non-material content (ideas, thoughts) within your subconscious. You're imagining it all. Clearly your subconscious is capable of expressing itself as matter.

The parallel is between your subconscious imagining its content as a dream in your sleeping mind and collective conscious (all the human consciousnesses together) imagining a material concept of its content (called "reality") in the universal Mind. ***It's obviously possible***

that the matter we experience when "awake" is consciousness expressed in mind.

For example, can you prove that this page you're reading right now has an external existence outside of your mind? The story is that photons are bouncing off this page onto the retinas of your eyes. There they get converted into nerve impulses that travel up the optic nerve into a vision center in your brain where they, presumably, get converted into the image you're seeing. Of course, that vision center in your brain has never "seen

a piece of paper. All it has ever experienced is bio-electrical impulses traveling up your optical nerve and around the circuits of your brain. Where does the imagery come from?

Similarly, hearing is supposedly the result of nerve impulses transmitted by the auditory nerve to a hearing center in the brain. Now we have bio-electrical impulses traveling around in your brain being interpreted as sounds rather than images. And, again, your brain has never had exposure to anything but the impulses, not even the sound waves. They stopped at your eardrum. Where do the sounds, the notes, the tunes, the orchestrations come from?

The same case can be made for taste sensations, such as sweet and sour, smell sensations, such as fragrant or malodorous, and

touch sensations such as hardness and texture. They're all just bio-electrical impulses being interpreted (imagined) by your mind.

Why are some impulses "heard" as sounds and other impulses "seen" as images, felt as textures or hardness, smelled as fragrances or malodorousness or tasted as sweet or sour? Where does the actual experience of these sensations come from? Imagination?

Time and Space are Not Real

The sages also tell us that time and space are not real—that they only exist in our minds. By "real" they mean "having an independent, external existence," i.e., that they would exist even if there were no one who was aware of them.

In your dream of sitting at the table in Starbucks, reading this nonsense, drinking your latte and enjoying the camaraderie of your friends, the experience might appear to last for an hour or two. Yet someone monitoring your brain with an EEG during the dream would note that the dream actually lasted for only a second or two. And they would not see your head expand to provide enough space for a Starbucks. Yet, to you, in the dream, there was all that space and, upon awakening, you might be able to write down most, if not all, of the details of the hour long conversation you enjoyed with your friends. You would be remembering many minutes of conversation which took place in your dream in an elapsed ("real") time of a second or two. Obviously both the (Starbucks) space in which the dream took place and the (hour long) duration of the dream were imagined. Your subconscious created (imagined) the space and the time. And when you awakened you discovered that neither was real.

That's what's going on right here, right now, the sages tell us. The space you're in and the time

you're experiencing are both created by Mind. ***Time and space are simply necessary side effects of the experiencing of phenomena within Mind.***

Free Will

The sages have made many statements about free will and determinism. Ramana Maharshi once raised, then lowered, his arm and said that that action was determined before he came into that body. Robert Adams, when I asked him about free will, told me to discover (or try to discover) who it was who had the free will.

Who decided that the "you" in your Starbucks dream would have a latte rather than a cappuccino? The you in the dream might have discussed the pros and cons of lattes with one of the others at the table and finally "decided" on the latte. If the "you" in your dream were asked "you" could have told someone how "you" arrived at the choice. Yet that "you" is merely part of the dream. That "you" is completely imaginary. The source, the determiner, of all the elements and activities (imaginations) in the dream, the "you," the others, the setting, the dialogs, the actions, the "decisions," is your subconscious. Your subconscious determined that you would have the latte, even though the "you" in the dream would argue vehemently that he or she had made the choice.

It's even easier to see that your friends in the dream couldn't have decided what drink *they* were going to have. It was *your* dream. Yet everyone in the dream, had they been questioned in the dream, would undoubtedly

have said that they had exercised free will when choosing their drink.

The sages point out that it is exactly the same in this "waking" experience (the leela). ***The source, the determiner, of all these imaginations called "reality," the "you," the others, the setting, the dialogs, the actions, the "decisions," is Consciousness Itself.***

If you're unconvinced by these simple paragraphs, please follow Robert's advice: Go within, and try to find the one who has the free will.

The "Past"

The sages also tell us that there is neither past nor future.

Have you ever noticed that your dreams start right in the middle? Suddenly there you were at Starbucks, with your friends, choosing a drink. You didn't get up in the morning, brush your teeth, put on your clothes and walk or drive to Starbucks. There you were in mid-conversation. But, if one of your friends in the dream had asked you what you did the night before, you could have told her; you would have had an answer. The you in your dream could have told someone his or her entire life story up to that point (and it might have been different than the life story of you, the dreamer). Your subconscious would create (imagine) details of your "past" life, as necessary.

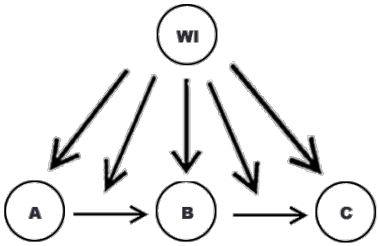
Similarly, when you're awake you can tell someone your past history, but it's all simply thoughts (which we choose to call "remembrances") coming to you *right now*. In fact, are you sure this entire experience you're conscious of right now didn't start just this instant? ***Perhaps your past is merely a story which is created whenever you think about it or when someone asks!***

Cause and Effect

Cause and effect are pretty clear in the leela. Physics is all about what causes what, and how, in the material world. But what about cause and effect in your Starbucks dream? Did your subconscious, for some reason, need to express the ordering of a latte, which resulted in its delivery, or did your subconscious need to express drinking a latte, which resulted in your having to order it? Remember, your subconscious is driving. Which did your subconscious need to express, the ordering of the latte or the drinking of it – or both equally?

And what was the cause of your friends' conversations? Clearly "they" had no need to say what they were saying. They're just dream beings. They had no needs or desires to fulfill; they had no opinions that they needed to express, or loves or sorrows to share. Their responses to others' statements or questions were not theirs. Did each sentence in the conversation elicit the subsequent response, or was the entire conversation part of a bigger whole?

David Hawkins draws a picture something like:



We experience A causing B through some action, and, subsequently, B causing C through another action. But, in fact, everything is an expression of Consciousness (What Is), including A, B, C and both actions, just like the entire dream package was an expression of your subconscious, not of the individuals in the dream. The idea of cause and effect is added by our mind purely as the result of the time sequence. You can see this clearly in the case of your Starbucks dream.

Everything in Mind is an effect of Consciousness, and effects in Mind cannot be causes. The only cause driving Mind is Consciousness.

Manifestation and Source are One

We hear from the sages that manifestation and source (or noumenon and phenomena, or nirvana and samsara) are One. We can easily see that this is true in your Starbucks dream.

What is the Starbucks table you're sitting at in your dream made out of? Not wood! The dream is taking place inside your head and there's no wood in your head (well…, but you get the point). The table is dreamed, *imagined*. It has no "real" existence, no "real" substance. Its "substance" is imagination. And the substance of you and your friends and the cappuccinos is also imagination. But imagination is a function or an activity of consciousness, or of your subconscious in this case, since you're dreaming, so the table and everything else in your dream are made out of subconscious, which is the source of the dream.

Obviously, the manifestation and the source are one, in your dream! Maybe also in this "waking" dream? We already have seen, in "Matter Is Mind," that we can't prove that there is matter. In fact, we saw that your brain is imaging "reality" out of nerve impulses running around inside it. ***So the substance of what you're seeing (imagining) is, in actual fact, nothing but imagination.***

Omnipresence

We often hear that God is Omniscient, Omnipotent and Omnipresent. Our dreams make it easy for us to see what these terms really mean. We'll look at them in the next three sections, beginning in this one with omnipresence.

Omnipresent means "present everywhere all the time." This is certainly true of your subconscious with respect to your dream. Your dream is taking place "within" your subconscious; your dream is, in fact, an expression (manifestation) of your subconscious; your subconscious is not only omnipresent in your dream, it is the creator and the substance of your dream. And, of course, it is present for the entire dream.

We also sometimes hear that *all* of WhatIs is present at *every* point in manifestation. Sounds a little cramped, huh? Again let's look at our dreams to gain understanding. To begin with, what does "every point" mean? Certainly not every point in the entire *space* within your dream. Remember, the space in your dream isn't real, doesn't exist. The dream is taking place within your sub-conscious in no-space. It's actually nothing more than a point of awareness within your sub-consciousness, and your sub-conscious is certainly *all* present (all available) at that point of awareness.

Similarly, the space in this waking dream doesn't exist. All we are dealing with is a point of awareness, which we call (fill in your name), being aware of other points of awareness, within the non-space of Consciousness. ***Surely all of Consciousness is available at all of these points of awareness. Awareness is Consciousness***.

Omniscience

Omniscient means "knowing everything" or "having all knowledge." Obviously this is also true of your subconscious with respect to your dream. Since your subconscious is the source of everything in the dream, it knows of everything in the dream, every object, every sensation, every thought. If it isn't imagined (hence known) by your subconscious, it isn't in the dream.

Similarly in this waking dream everything is in Consciousness, hence known. We saw in "Matter Is Mind" that there's no way to prove the existence of anything that no one is conscious of. ***Everything that is, is known to Omniscient Consciousness.***

Omnipotence

Omnipotent means "having all power." Again this is obvious about your subconscious with respect to your Starbucks dream. Your subconscious is sole source, sole creator, sole orchestrator, sole sustainer. Everything in the dream is an effect of your subconscious—it's creation— hence powerless. Everything in the dream is determined by your subconscious and nothing in the dream affects your subconscious.

It's worth observing that the your subconscious, (the Omnipotent One of your dream), cannot be used by any of its effects within the dream. ***Those being dreamed are intimately connected (closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet) with Omnipotence, but can in no way avail themselves of that intimacy***.

Everything is Nothing

I used to love it when Robert Adams said, "Everything is Nothing!" That certainly put everything in its place! Not much room left for concern—except maybe about what that meant. (I spent my first year with him wishing he'd say what he meant rather than coming out with all these obscure sayings.)

But now that we're looking at the Starbucks dream it's transparently obvious what that means. There is no external reality for the objects and activities in your dream. Everything in your dream is literally nothing. When you wake up it's not only gone, it never was, except in your imagination. It had no more reality than a hallucination.

Robert was saying everything is nothing in this dream too! No "thing" has any reality other that Imagination. (He meant exactly what he was saying.)

I vs. Me

Suppose, while you're in your Starbucks dream with your friends, someone walks in with an AK-47 and begins shooting up the place. Maybe one of your friends is killed. Suddenly your dream is a nightmare! Your pulse is pounding, you're filled with adrenaline, your heart is broken! Then you wake up. It was all a dream. Your heart is still pounding, but nothing happened.

What's the difference between a sweet dream and a nightmare? Nothing happens in either. Nothing happened to *you* (the dreamer) in either. The problem is one of identification. If you, the dreamer, had not been identified with the "you" in the dream, the dream would not have been a nightmare. It would still, perhaps, have been exciting, or sad, or whatever, but you would have been watching it happen to your proxy in the dream, like watching a movie about yourself, perhaps a sad movie, but not a nightmare.

And if, in fact, the you in the dream were aware the she or he was being dreamed, the entire scene would have been no big deal. Just a dream. You in the dream would have known that nothing was really happening. Then, also, there would not have been a nightmare.

Similarly, the only problem in this "waking" dream is identification. ***All that needs to***

happen is your "I," your Subjective Self, the Consciousness that you call I, that actually is your Self, needs to stop identifying with your "me," the objective you, the body/mind expression within Mind, the effect of that Consciousness.

Time Doesn’t Exist

It's really pretty easy to see the ridiculousness of the existence of time, in your Starbucks dream or out here in this dream.

First of all, there's no such thing as the "past" in either dream. The past is nowhere; it's gone; it's inaccessible. We can think about the past, remember the past, but that thinking and remembering happens now. You might say that there *was* a past, but where is it now? Where does it exist?

Ditto for the "future." It too is nowhere, inaccessible; it hasn't come into existence yet.

That only leaves the "present.” But, actually, there’s no expanse of time in the present. One microsecond ago is already in the non-existent past. One microsecond from now is still in the nonexistent future. The same is true about a nanosecond ago and a nanosecond from now, or a femtosecond. The amount of time in the present is infinitesimal. The present is actually just this instant, which has no duration. So there’s no time in the present. The present, too, is nonexistent.

Yet here I sit in this vast experience of Now, beginningless, endless Now. There is no sense of time passing. I don't experience anything rushing from a “future” into a “past.” It's only when I *think* that past and future come into existence. They're concepts that I've come up

with to talk about time. Time is a by-product of experiencing, a concept that allows me to talk about experiencing in sequence (oops, there it is again), about change. And change also is a concept I've constructed. I don't *experience* change. Only when I compare how I see things now with how I think (now) they were in the non-existent past, do I come up with change.

Time, past, future, present, and change clearly are nothing more than constructions of my mind.

Here and Now

Suppose you decide to take the freeway to a Starbucks in the next town (in either dream). While you're driving, are you zooming along the freeway in your car, passing exits one by one, approaching the mountains up ahead, or are you just sitting there in your car, with the cement of the freeway passing by underneath you, as the exits zip past and the mountains draw closer?

If the former is your experience you're never anywhere! You're zipping past an infinite number of points, spending an infinitesimal amount of time at each. If the latter is your experience you're always "here," sitting in the seat of your car for the duration of the trip. Which is your experience? Zipping or being at rest. It's all in your viewpoint.

The same is true of time. Either you're zipping along through life, moving from your nonexistent past into your nonexistent future, so to speak, dashing through an infinite series of infinitesimal instants, spending no time anywhere, or you're always in the "now," this eternal, durationless, dimensionless, timeless now. Again, it's a matter of viewpoint – your viewpoint. The former viewpoint leads to stress, the latter, peace.

Actually we're always here, now, at the center of this eternal, infinite expanse called Mind. In fact, we are this eternal,

infinite expanse called Mind. It's only our body images within Mind that can think of themselves as moving through space and time.

Awakening

Robert Adams used to ask, "Who will awaken?", and Osho asked, "What makes you think you will know when you are awakened?"

So you're dreaming that you're in Starbucks with a number of friends and suddenly a man in a ski mask comes in with an assault rifle and starts shooting people. (Must be a reoccurring dream.) Dreaming that you call 911 is not going to save your friends' lives. By the time the dream police get there everybody in the dream, including you, will be dead. The only solution is to wake up! But please notice that the you in the dream, the one that was going to call 911, is not the you that needs to wake up. That you never existed except as an image in your dream. The you that is doing the dreaming is the one that needs to wake up.

Also notice that waking up did not save the you in the dream. That you was in no danger. That you was imaginary.

The parallel doesn't quite work in this waking dream, but it's close enough to make the point: The you in this dream is not the one who needs to wake up. The you in this dream never existed either, except as an image in mind. The parallel works to this point.

The difference is that there is no one who needs to awaken. The dreamer is Consciousness Itself (yourSelf). It is eternally awake. You are the

very awareness of the dream itself. All that is needed is dis-identification with the dream-you. ***The realization that you are, and always have been, yourSelf, reflects in the waking dream as what others in the dream call an awakened being.*** But if the you in the waking dream thinks that *she* or *he* has awakened, he or she hasn't.

So the answers to Robert's and Osho's questions are "No one" and "*You* won't"!

P.S.

On second thought: Don't dream on! (It guarantees intervals—frequent intervals—of pain.) Don't awaken! (Who is it that will awaken?) Don't even try to wake up! (Trying to wake up is just part of the dream.) Just Be the Being that you already are—the Consciousness that is Aware of the dream.